

In the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows:

On page 1, before the Field of the Invention section, please insert the following paragraph.

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/429,620 filed November 27, 2002, the entire disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Please amend the following subparagraphs starting on page 6, line 34 through page 7, line 19.

- e) a) providing a starting zeolite of the faujasite structure having a silica to alumina ratio of from about 4.5 to about 6.5 and an alkali level of less than about 1.5%wt;
- f) b) hydrothermally treating said starting zeolite at a temperature in the range of from 600 to 850°C and at a partial pressure of steam in the range of from 0.2 to 1 atmosphere for a time effective to produce a intermediate zeolite having a unit cell size of from 24.30, preferably from 24.35, especially from 24.38, to 24.45 Å, preferably to 24.43 Å, especially to 24.42 Å;
- g) c) contacting the intermediate zeolite with an acidified solution comprising an acid and optionally an ammonium salt under conditions effective to produce a high surface area zeolite having a unit cell size in the range of from 24.10 to 24.40 Å, a molar silica to alumina ratio of greater than about 12 and a surface area of greater than about 850 m²/g, thereby producing the high surface area zeolite; and
- h) d) recovering the high surface area zeolite.